

As Barbie Broads France's Complacency, He Spurs W. Germany's

By William Dowdall
Associated Press

BONN. — An episode of the 13-part series "Europe Under the Stars," was drawing to a close as the television screen filled with a collage of grisly copies who were victimized by their Frenchmen in the days of the Nazi occupation.

The multitude of informers and

deputy torturers who abetted the

Nazi rape of their own country, the

German narrator implied, had been

forgiven or forgotten — as is always

the case in France.

After marking the 50th anniversary of Adolf Hitler's rise to power with agonizing self-applause, West Germans are watching with a touch of schadenfreude, in analagous delight as the French cope with tales of collaboration that have emerged since the arrest and deportation to France of Klaus Barbie, known as the Nazi "Butcher of Lyon."

Last month France and West Germany celebrated its 40 years since signing a friendship treaty with an exchange of state visits by their two

leaders that heralded the countries' intimate economic and political ties.

Yet, despite the remarkable metamorphosis involved in shedding decades drawing to a close as the alliance filled with a collage of grisly copies who were victimized by their Frenchmen in the days of the Nazi occupation.

West Germans disdain France's ingering self-righteous toward the war, particularly the reluctance to debunk myths of French resistance. And more than any of West Germany's neighbors, France fears a German nationalistic resurgence in the wake of a swing toward neutrality.

Barbie's arrest has evoked expectation in West German political circles. That France should start to come to terms with its worst chapters of the war, just as West Germany has with a spate of programs and exhibits analyzing the Nazi era this year — in contrast to the virtual blackout in

West Germany during the early 1970s — crimes might spoil the warm climate of relations so recently tested in Paris and Bonn.

Rather than result in shame over past failings, the absence of breast-beating in West Germany over the Barbie case despite accounts that he worked for

any consideration of France's justice or German as well as US intelligence services while in exile and was not sought for extradition by Bonn until

Differences over those 180 key arrests forced memory's own French

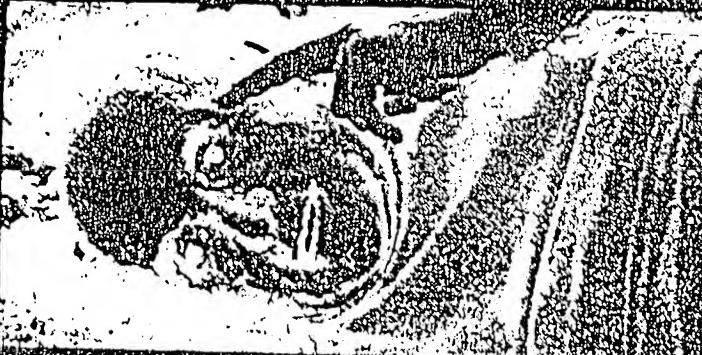
and West German Social Democrats who have been striving to encourage cooperation that would keep new missiles out of West Germany.

"The French claim about neutralism is absolute stupidity and nonsense," said the Social Democrats' disarmament expert Peter Bahn. In an interview, Mitterrand is the real successor to Charles de Gaulle, who favors every US weapons system in West Germany so long as he does not have to take them in France.

Bahn accompanied his party's candidate for chancellor in the March 6 elections, Hans-Jochen Vogel, on a trip to Paris last month following visits to Washington and Moscow.

After telling the French president that if he were so keen on a peaceable solution to the missile crisis he should consider them for his own country, Bahn quoted Mitterrand as replying that negotiations in France and West Germany were not comparable, for history has shown that the Federal Republic of Germany as not independent and is obliged to remain under the US security umbrella.

MARTIN DARDIE



As Barbie Broads France's Complacency, He Spurs W. Germany's

... A21

... A21

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3 B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2000 2006